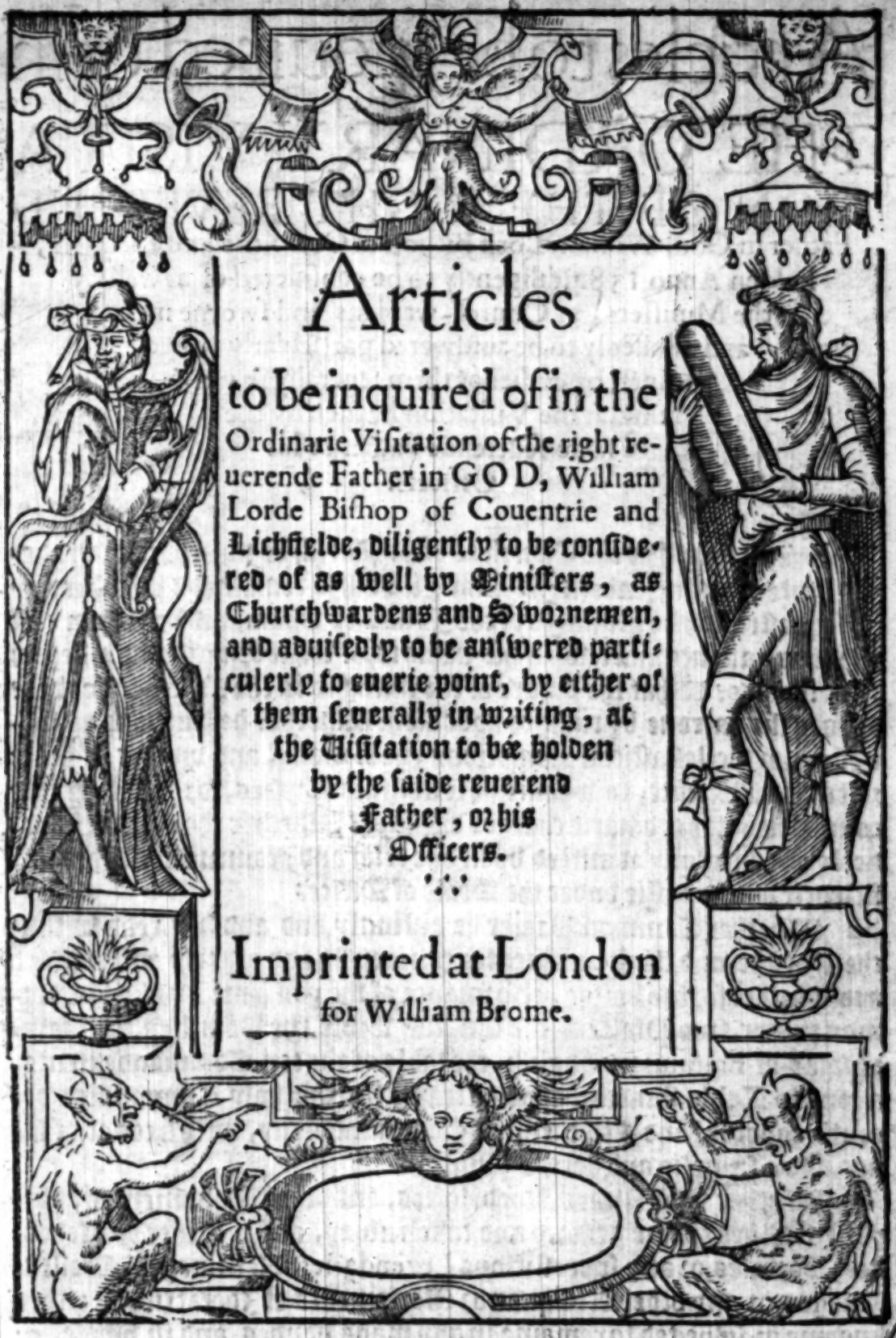

Articles

to be inquired of in the Ordinarie Visitation of the right reuerende Father in GOD, William Lorde Bishop of Couentrie and Lichfielde, diligently to be considered of as well by Ministers, as Churchwardens and Swornemen, and aduisedly to be answered particulerly to euerie point, by either of them seuerally in writing, at the Visitation to bee holden by the saide reuerend Father, or his Officers.

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4° I. 2* Th. Seld.

Articles to be inquired of in THE ORDINARY VISITATION OF THE RIGHT REVEREND

Father in God, William Lord Bishop of Couentrie and Lichfield, holden Anno 1584. diligently to be considered of, as well by the Ministers, as Church-wardens and sworne men, and aduisedly to be aunswered particularly to euepoinct, by eyther of them seuerally in writing, at the Visitation holden by the saide reuerende Father or his Officers.

INprimis, whether the Church of your Parish be now vacant and destitute of an incombent: how long it hath so remained: whether any sequestration be graunted of the Fruits, to whom, and by whom? If it haue an incumbēt, what his name is, of what bringing vp & degree in Schooles? What the valure of the liuing is in the Quēnes bookes? Who is the patrone by right or aduouson? Whether he hath anie mo benefices, or Ecclesiasticall promotions, how many, and where? If he lie not in his Benefice, to whome he letteth his Tythes, for what yeerely commoditie, the ordinarie charges deducted? Whether the Curate be orderly and lawfully admitted vpon due trial and examination of his sufficiencie and honestie vnder the Seale of Office?

2 Whether Common Praier be distinctly and audibly read within the Parishe, and the Sacramentes reuerently and orderly administred and whether for the better performance of thē you haue a booke of Common praier, two Psalters, the English Bible, the Homilies, the Paraphrases of Erasmus in English, the table of the ten Commandements, a comely Table standing vppon a frame for the holy Communion decently couered, and a conuenient Communion cup, with a couer of siluer, and a sēmelie and decent Pulpit.

3 Whether your Altars, Roodeloftes, and other Monumentes of superstition bee cleane defaced and taken away, and whether Masseboockes, Portases, or any superstitious Legendaries, Vestiments, Crosses, Images, or any other Reliques or Monuments of Idolatrie, be either knowne or suspected to remaine in any mans handes, and in whose, or what you know are become of those which you had?

4 Whether your Parson, Vicar, or Curate, be a painfull, zelous and diligent preacher: at the least whether he doth procure quarterly or h

nethly Sermons according to the Queenes Iniunctions, especially vpon such daies as the holy Communion shalbe ministred for the better instruction & preparation towards ỳ action: And whether he doth duely and orderly according to the said Iniunctions, Cathechise euery Sonday with exposition of the same, for the better instruction of the youth of ỳ parish, and Christian enformatiõ of other the hearers, and whether such as are to be Cathechised attend orderly at the time to be instructed, or who they be that make default or shew thẽselues obstinate therein. And whether your Minister doth carefully repaire to visite the sick of your Parishe for their spirituall comforte, and willingly attend hys charge in those extremities. And further where hee doth conferre with his Parishioners, especially such as he knoweth not throughly groũded in the way and knowledge of their saluation, for their better instruction before they repaire to the holy Communion. And if anye refuse thys necessary conferrence offered by the minister, not only to stay them frõ receiuing, but also to present what bee their names with their causes pretended?

5 Whether your Minister doth admit any to the Communion: or to be married, or to answere for Infantes in Babtisme, being not sufficiently Cathechised and able to yeald an accompt of their christian faith, ỳ whome conscience will not allure almost once to thinke seriously of the meanes of their saluation, yet other extraordinarye occasions maye driue for shame to some knowledge of Christianitie.

6 Whether any Officer for fauour, feare, or corruption, hath so qualified or dispensed with any publicke or notorious sinne, that the offenders hath bene restored to the Congregation and Sacraments, without christian publicke satisfaction, howe many haue bene presented heretofore, and how their causes haue bene ended, and for what cause the Minister without christian publicke satisfaction, hath admitted any to the christian participation of praiers and sacramentes. And whether any Officer, Archedeacon or Officiall haue delt with anye commutation of penaunce, and what bee their names, whose penaunces by them haue bene commuted, for what sinne, and how it hath bene vsed or employed?

7 Whether your Minister or any other of your Parishe be knowne or suspected as fauourers of the Romish Churche, superioritie, or religion. And whether anye runnagate Iesuites, or counterfaite Pasling Prieستes, going not according to the order of their professions, are knowen or suspected to frequent or haunt to any person or persons within your Parishe, sometime for a shift to lye or lurke with them: and whether they or any Scholemaister, or any other pretending the name of a

ſeruant, are ſuſpected to allure and perſwade any within your pariſhes from the true ſinceritie of the Goſpell, now by publicke authoritie eſtabliſhed to the vſing of Martins, Beades, and ſuche other vaine Popiſhe trifh trashe: or of any vnlawfull Popiſh bookes: And whether anye be reputed or ſuſpected to be reconciled to ỳ Church of Rome within your Pariſh, & what be their names? And whether you know or haue heard of any ſometime in orders, that now do liue as lay men?

8 Whether any of your Pariſhe doe altogether abſent themſelues from diuine ſeruice, or do ſeldome or negligently come to the Churche, or doe not continue there without diſturbance of the Miniſter and Congregation, not departing thence but vppon ſome iuſt and lawfull cauſe: And whether any of your Pariſhioners doe not receiue the Communiõ at the leaſt thrise in the yeare, according to her Maieſties lawes. And whether any hauing diuers houſes of remoue, doe ſhifte from place to place, in colour to defeate the performance of the Chriſtian duties in thoſe behalfes, what they be, and the names of euery of the familie that doth the like. And whether the particuler twelue pence be leuied according to the Statute?

9 Whether anye within your pariſhe, haue anye of their kindred or kinſfolke beyond the Seas, what be their names, and howe long they haue continued out of the realme, and what by heareſay, or in conſcīẽce you iudge ther affection to be in religion: Or whether any are knowne or ſuſpected to relieue any ſuch?

10 Whether your Miniſter keep any ſuſpected woman in his houſe or be geuen to dronkennelle, idleneſſe, or be a haunter of Tauerns, Alehouſes, or other ſuſpected place, or be Hunters, Hawkers, Dicers, Carders, Tablers, Swearers, or any wayes geue any euill example of life, or vnſeemely apparell, to the offence of others, and diſcredite of their calling. And whether they be reported or ſuſpected to haue come by their Benefice, or other Eccleſiaſticall promotions Simonically, directly, or indirectly?

11 Whether there belong anye glebe landes to your Parſonage or Vicarage, and how many ſeuerall parcelles there be, and howe muche they containe by eſtimation, whether any be alienated, exchaunged, or encroched vpon to the decay of the lining? And whether your Chanſell and Parſonage houſes be in good and ſufficient reparations, and whether your Church be in euery parte ſo maintained as were conuenient. And whether your Churchyardes be throughly fenced about and cleanly kept, and who is the cauſe of anye of theſe defaultes. And whether any Patrones haue decayed the Parſonage houſes, and keep a Stipend

Priest in place, where an Incumbent should be possessed?

12 Whether your Minister keepe well their Registers of all Weddinges, Burialles, and Christninges within your Parish, according to the Queenes Iniunctions, and doe present a Copie of them once euery yeare by Indenture, to the Chauncellor or his Deputie, to remaine of recorde in the principall Office.

13 Whether any within your Parish administer the goods of those that bee dead without lawfull authoritie: Or any are suspected to haue suppressed or altered the last wil of the dead, or any Executors that haue not fulfilled the Testators will, especially in performing of Legacies geuen to other good vses, or maintenaunce of the poore.

14 Whether you haue a Schoolemaister in your Parishe, and whether your Schoolemaister teaching publickely or priuately bee of good and sincere religion & conuersation, and whether they be examined and allowed by the Ordenarie or his Officer in that behalfe. And whether any liuing giuen towardes the erection or maintenaunce of any schoole, be withholden backe or otherwise any waies employed.

15 Whether any haue pulled down or discouered any church, chancell or Chappell, Porche, Vestrie, Steeple, Almehouse, Belles, or anye parte of them, or felled Wood or Timber in the churchyarde. And whether your Hospitalles, Spittelles, or Almeshouses be well and godly vsed and maintained according to the foundation and auncient ordinaunces of the same?

16 Whether any entertainment bee geuen, or gaming vsed in anye Innes or Alehouses, or other Victualers in time of deuine Seruice or Sermons: Or whether any Butchers, Victualers, Pedlers, or anye other Artificers in time of common prayer or Sermon, open their shops or wares: And whether your Minister customably remembreth your Churchwardens and Swornemen, to attend their charge in suche behalfe.

17 Whether your church goods, stockes, or rentes be let to the best commoditie, and for such vses as they were first ment, or now are to be employed and conuerted, no other waies. Or whether the same bee encreased or decayed, by what meanes, who being churchwardens, whether any are behinde with making their accomptes, or be thought not to haue made a true, perfect, and sufficient accompt, what landes or stocks should be or yet remaine?

18 Whether any within your Parishe be suspected to vse Sorcerie, Witchcraft, Charmes, vnlawful Prayers, or Inuocations in Latin or English: namely, Midwiues in time of womens trauaile with childe:

and who resorte to such for helpe or counsaille?

19 Whether the Minister or Churchwardens haue suffered anye Lordes of Misrule, or Sommer Lords or Ladies, or any disguised persons, or Morisedancers, or others at Christmas, or any time in sommer to come vnreuerently pyping, daunsing, or playing in church or churchyarde, with vnseemely scoffes, iestes, ribaudrie, or at any other place & time, namely in time of deuine Seruice, or Sermons, and what they be that commit such disorders, or accompanie, or maintaine them?

20 Whether any of your parish haue bene maried within ỹ degrees of affinitie, and consanguinitie forbidden by the lawes of God, & whether for the better knowledge and direction of those degrees, you haue the Table drawne out to that ende, affixed publiquely in your Parishe Churche: And whether any diuorsed or separated for marying within those degrees, be notwithstanding conuersant and keep company together: Whether any man be suspected to haue two wiues, anye woman two husbandes, any maried after a former precontract: any priuy or secret contractes without consent of Parentes, Tutors, or Gouernors: or any married without Banes thrise solemply asked: or out of your Parish where one of them at the least doth inhabite. And whether any maried liue apart, and not continue together according to the lawes of god and the realme. What licences to marry haue bene graunted since the death of the last Bishop, the Ministers shall exhibite to vs or our Officers at the Visitation.

21 Whether any of your Parish be known, defamed, or vehemently suspected of any notorious sinne, fault, or crime, as of Vserie, swearing Adulterie, Fornication, Incest, Baudrie, Drunkennesse, Ribaldrie, Slaundering, Contention, sowing of discorde betweene neighbours, priuie receiuing women vnlawfully begotten with childe, or suffering them to depart before publicke satisfaction made to the Congregation? Or whether there be any fighters, Quarrellers, Brawlers, or Chiders in the Churche or Churchyarde, anye Scoffers, Rimers, or diriders of Ministers, or any that lay violent handes on them, or any of them, or otherwise abuse them?

All and euery of the particulers of the premises you are dilligently to enquire of, and as well the ministers seuerally, as the Churchwardens and Sidemen, ioyntly to present the defaultes of euery of them in writing subscribed with their names. And generally whatsoeuer breaches and offences els they shall know or heare committed against anye of the Queenes Maiesties Iniunctions, or anye of the Ecclesiasticall Lawes of this Realme.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

Certaine aduertisementes,

FOR A CONTINVAL ORDER TO BE obserued inuiolably without any alteration touching the pointes following, within the Dioceſſe of Couentrie and Liehfield.

INprimis, for that the want of a ſufficient Miniſterie is not onely the Nurſe of Ignorance and Popery, but alſo the cauſe of all Atheiſme, diſobedience, and diſſoluteneſſe of life: And the corruptiõ of Patrons, aboundeth to the great decay of the ſufficient maintenance of Miniſters, this ſetled order is ſet down to preuent either inconuenience wher of all Patrones together with ſuch as are to be preſented to Benifices, hereby without further intimation are to take knowledge within this Dioceſe of Couentrie and Lichfield, vz.

That whoſoeuer ſhall hereafter bee preſented to any Benifice, ſhall attend for his publicke examination the firſt day of euerie moneth only, openly in the conſiſtorie at Lichfield, betweene the houres of eight and aleuen (if it be not a Sonday or Holiday) then the nert daie following, where the reuerende Father in God the now Lord Biſhop in perſon, or the Chauncellor at the leaſt, or the Chauncelors Deputie giuing attendance, and calling for their aſſiſtance foure other Preachers at the leaſt ſhall and will cauſe the gifts and learning of the partie preſented to bee throughly examined, and preſently vppon conference betwene them of his ſufficiencie, to ſet their Iudgementes downe ſolempnly in a booke made and kept for that purpoſe, to notifie their allowance, or diſſallowance. And for the better and more aſſured performannce of this aduertiſement greatly heretofore neglected and abuſed, as well for want of appointing certaine ſufficient and ſincere Examiners vſually to attend this charge as otherwiſe, the ſaid reuerend Father in his now purpoſed Viſitation will publiſh to the whole Countrey the names of ſuch Preachers, by whoſe credite and conſcience he will chiefly commit this charge and truſt, beſides the pretence of ſuch as being alwaies nere at hande may be vſed and required.

And although the man for his learning ſhall be quallified, and bring beſides Letters teſtimoniall for his good behauiour according to order, yet for that ſuch Teſtimonialls haue by often and too much experience beene proued to proceed of heareſay, and importunitie of intreatie, without any through knowledge of the partie ſo commended. Therefore the

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partie so presented and allowed as before, shall with license of the Ordinarie, repaire eftsons to that Parish, and aswell acquaint his Parishners with his persone as his giftes, that moneth onely, reading the first Sunday he commeth thither, this publicke aduertisement in time of diuine Seruice. And so the first day of the next moneth following, to repaire to the saide reuerend Father, or by his direction to the Office for his Institution, (if none shall vndertake to proue against him some notorious default that day of his apparance) and so without further delay to bee dispatched, giuing first his oath besides other matters, that neither by himselfe, nor any for him he hath vsed Simonie, in attaining to that liuing directly or indirectly, according to the Ecclesiastical lawes in that behalfe prouided and established.

2 Item, for that the lawes of this Realme do permit diuers persons sufficiently qualified and dispensed withall, to enioye twoo Benefices, and to demise the one to a sufficient Curate, it is likewise ordered that the first day of the next moneth after the Visitation ended, all the Curates, in & throughout the Diocesse of Couentrie and Lichfield, shal attend at the Consistorie Court, where the foresaide reuerend Father in person, or his Chauncelor at the least, or the Chancelors deputy assisted with foure preachers, named & published in euerie sessiõ of this visitation, with other such mere assistants, as shalbe called and vsed as before, wil be readie to sit for that purpose, and exhibiting their former licenses to the Ordinarie, if so be vpon this further triall and examination, they shall appeare mete in all respects for that congregation, euerie circumstance well waied & duly considered, then to be continued in the former place and seruice, otherwise to haue warning to depart, and the Incumbent likewise to haue conuenient notice to prouide him of a more sufficient Minister within a reasonable time: And no Curate to be accepted or allowed in any Parishe without the license of the Ordinarie vnder his seale. Prouided further, that the licenses graunted to Curates shall not generally extend to any place vncertainely, but shall namely containe the particular Parish whereto he shall be commended, and that al licenses contrarie to this order to be reformed. And further that no Curates, who are to supplye the absence of an other qualified by lawe, bee vsed as instruments onely by colour to defeat the good meaning of the Statutes in that behalfe prouided, to the benefit of Laie men, but themselues to enioy the commodities allotted to their owne better maintenance, according to the true meaning of the Statute.

3 Item, for that the peruerse obstinate vntowardnesse of diuers yong Gentlemen in religion, doth argue a manifest & most intollerable ...

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ruption in their bringing vp and in Schoolemaisters, that all Schole-maisters, aswel in anie noble or Gentlemens houses, as otherwise pub-lickly or priuatelye teaching within anie Towne of this Diocesse, shall likewise bring in their Licences heretofore to them graunted, the third daie of the first moneth next after the Visitation before the saide reue-rend Father, or his Chauncelor at the least, or the Chauncelors Depu-tie, with the foresaide Preachers and assistantes attending this seruice in the Consistorie at Lichfielde, to whom if they do not sufficiently al-low their habilitie for learning, their soundnesse for Religion, their ho-nestie for conuersation by learning and testimonie of suche as are well knowne to the Bishop, then to bee displaced and inhibited to continue their teaching anie longer within this Diocesse. Otherwise with very good fauour and allowance to remaine in their former estate, enioined once a quarter at the least to examine his schollers in the Catechisme, and to see them frequent al exercises of Religion according to their dis-cretion: And no Schoolemaister to haue or enioy any generall Licence, throughout the whole Diocesse vncertainely, but to teach in that parti-culer place whereto he shall bee allowed, and the Licences contrarie to this order to be reformed.

4 Item, for that to helpe the lamentable inconueniences growing to the Church of God by the insufficient Ministerie, they are not onely to bestirred which are already made Ministers, but also a diligent care and foresight is to be vsed, that only sufficient men be admitted to that func-tion hereafter. Therefore the foresaide reuerend Father would haue al and euery within this Diocesse of Couentrie and Lichfield, which in-tend for themselues or their frendes, to sollicite for orders of the Min-isterie to take knowledge hereby, that they & euery of them must attend for publike examination and triall, the first day of euerie quarter of the yeere onely in the Consistorie of Lichfielde, where the said reuerend, or his Chauncelor, with the Archdeacons and other assistantes and forena-med Preachers to be called, making due proofe by publicke examinati-on of all circumstances required by law, and immediatly setting down their iudgements accordingly, and if he or they vpon such triall shall be found worthy, then by the said reuerend Father to receiue orders, if the said reuerend Father shall thinke it so meete and conuenient, otherwise either to be cleane reiected, or referred ouer to their further sufficiencie: and no priuate orders otherwise either to be sued, looked for, or perfor-med within this Diocesse of Couentrie and Lichfield.

5 Item, for that sundrie and manifolde inconueniences haue ensued the graunt of Licenses to marrie, these circumstances shal be obserued,

by the Officers who are to graunt the same. First, that they do not rashly without aduertisement frō the Minister, or some such as they know to be of good credit and honestie graunt the License. Secondly, that they include in the bands taken consent of the Parents, Tutors, or Gouernors. Thirdly, that the direction of the license be made to one of the ministers, where the parties to be maried shall dwell, who cannot be ignorant of the estate of the parties, and may stay the proceeding to mariage according to the License, if he know or suspect any lawful impediment, aduertising the Chaunceller with all conuenient speed of the cause of his stay. Otherwise no License to be graunted, vnlesse the matter be notoriously knowne to the Officer authorized to dispence in that behalfe.

6 Item, that none denounced or to be denounced and published excommunicate, shall hereafter be admitted to the Church, or receiuing of the Sacraments, without due absolution testified to the Minister & Churchwardens, vnder the Ordinaries hand or Seale: And that such as continue obstinately so denounced or excommunicate, be publikely notified to the whole Congregation from time to time to their amendment or further discredite.

7 Item that the ordinance of the Booke of Common Prayer bee from henceforth obserued in this, that the Bread deliuered to the Communicants, be such as is vsual to be eaten at the Table with other meats, yet of the purest and finest Wheat: and no other bread to be vsed by the Minister, nor to be prouided for by the Churchwardens & Parishners then such finest common bread.

8 Item, whereas priuate Baptisme in time of necessitie standeth tollerated by the Booke of Common Prayer, and therevpon not onely diuers old women and Midwiues haue both against Gods laws and the meaning of the said Booke, presumed to intrude themselues into that ministerie & function, but also vnder colour of such priuate Baptismes, many times wicked Iesuits, masse Priests or Reconciles haue beene knowne to Baptise Infants: It is therefore ordered to be receiued and obserued, that if vpon any reasonable causes moving the Parents and Minister, they thinke not good to exped the next Sabaoth or Holyday, for the more commendable performance of that Sacrament in the presence of the whole Congregation at Church: That then it be performed with a conuenient multitude of such as shalbe knowne sound and well effected to Religion, and either by the Minister of the Parish himselfe, or other knowne Minister with his priuitie or consent. And that henceforth no women presume to intrude themselues into Babtizing of Infants in any respect or condition.

9 Item, for the better obseruing of all and singuler these aduertisementes and due presentment of the seuerall breaches and defaults of ỹ same and the forsaid Articles, it is ordered that speciall choyse and regarde be made of such Churchwardens and Sidemen in euery Parishe, Village and Hamlet, whiche are knowne to fauour and conforme themselues to the lawes and Religion nowe established, and be of honest and good accompt for their life and maners, and not towardes such as bee professed & obstinate Recusantes, and that according to the wholesome aduertisementes and Canons in that behalfe prouided, no elections be made of the forsaid Officers in the Ministers absence or without hys consent. And that euery Minister shall haue a speciall care and regarde of his doctrie in this behalfe vpon his credite w̄ his Ordinary, as whervpon dependeth the whole direction of reformation of things amisse.

10 Item, whereas the forsaid Officers stande charged by vertue of their corporall othes taken faithfully and carefully to discharge their duelies, and without fauoure, malice, or feare, truely to present all defaults & abuses as they fall out from time to time, aswell for the auoyding of wilfull periurie, as the preuenting and cutting off of sinne & offences before they grow to full & perfect ripenesse, the Minister shall do well euery sonday & holiday after euening prayer to call the Churchewardens and Sidemen of euery Parishe vnto him in the Churche, and there to conferre and aduise together vppon perusall and consideration of these articles and aduertisementes, what hath fallen out within that their Parish contrarie to any of them worthy reformation or presentment, or worthy priuate admonition for amendment: And so eyther according to their discretions to admonish the parties to preuēt their own discredites, and any publicke offence like to growe: or els to present or notifie all suche euill misdemeanours to the Chancellour, or such Commissaries, Deane, Rurales, or other Officers, as hee shall thinke best to appoint in euerie Deanrie from time to time.

11 Item, that euery Minister within this Diocese bring in and exhibite to the Chauncellour at ỹ Visitation, his letters of orders, his letters dismissories if he came out of an other Diocese, his Institutiō, his Qualification, and dispensation to remaine in recorde in the Office.

12 Item, for that some offences and greuaunces haue alreadie and may grow hereafter to the subiect, by taking or exacting excessiue fees contrarie to law & the vsuall custome of this Diocese, to the misliking and discredite of Ecclesiasticall iurisdiction and the Officers thereof, & therefore the Ordinarie to preuent all inconueniences in that behalfe, hath geuen order, that as well his Chauncellor and Commissarie from

time to time, as his Register shall haue a Table in either of their Offices openly and publickely hanged vp to be seene, read, & considered of by euery one that shall be disposed or occasioned so to doe: wherein shall be fairely written and contained the seuerall rates of all and singuler fees due and appertaining to either of their Offices, and euery particularitie by them or either of them to be dispatched: whereby the sueters can not or neede not to be abused: yet for that some of simplicitie may be ouer-reached, and either for their daily labours whereby they liue are not able, or for feare of charges with delay would bee loth to prosecute reformation to their restitution. It hath further pleased the Lorde Bishop to prouide further in that behalfe, that euery Minister hearing any such griefe of any his Parishners, may be bold by his Letters onely directed to the Chauncellour, to certifie him of any such complaynt, with all the truth and circumstance of their dealing, and that by the Chauncellour the fault be presently looked into and reformed, whether it concerneth himselfe or the Register, without anye further charges or adoe, as they will haue the good fauour and liking of the Bishoppe, and answere vppon their perill to the contrary.

FINIS.